

A Brief ^{4920 a}
NARRATIVE
OF THE
LIFE,
LABOURS
AND
SUFFERINGS,
OF
ELIAS OSBORN.

*Mark the perfect Man, and behold the
Upright, for the End of that Man is
Peace. Psalm xxxvii. 37.*

L O N D O N :
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*A TESTIMONY from the
Quarterly Meeting in the County
of Somerset, concerning our dear
and well-beloved Friend, Elias
Osborne, late of Chard, in the
said County, who departed this
Life the 29th Day of the fourth
Month, 1720.*

IT's natural for Affection to move the strongest when depriv'd of its Objects, because what we enjoy by the Presence of our Friends while with us, makes us not so well to consider the Advantage we have of their Services as when they are remov'd, and we thereby sustain the Loss of their Labour.

This being often the Case, the Value of many good and vertuous Persons runs not so high in their Life-time as when they are dead, then it's common for some

to say (that perhaps had no great Value for them when living) such and such were good and serviceable Men in their Day. Thus Envy being silenc'd by Death, the deceased meet with that Praise after they are remov'd, which was due to them while living; and that Respect owing to their Persons, is often paid to their Memories, and their Advice more noted, and carries greater Weight when they are dead, then when they were living, tho' altogether the same.

Altho' this is not just parallel to our Case, yet so it is that we have seen the Loss of this our worthy Friend, in a more general Manner since his Death, then in the latter Part of his Life; tho' even then, through Weakness and Infirmary, he was render'd incapable of Service, but having the Opportunity of free Recourse and Converse with him, that Loss was not so much felt and perceiv'd by many as since.

Now as a Testimony to the Memory of this worthy Man, we further say, he was well Gifted in the Ministry, in which he labour'd with great Diligence and good Success, many being convinced by him.

him, and others confirm'd and strengthened in the Way of Righteousness. His Doctrine, and pious Example, was of eminent Service amongst us, and being endued with a good Understanding, was qualified to serve his Neighbours and Friends, often interposing as a Mediator, to reconcile Disorders; and being just, prudent, and skilful in such Affairs, he acquired great Repute amongst such with whom he was concerned, his Friends and Neighbours being large Sharers of his Services in so commendable and good a Work, as that of a *Peace-maker*.

He was of a singular good Disposition, not apt to give way to hard Thoughts, tho' sometimes had Cause for it; and if he heard any Thing not right of a Brother, or Neighbour, he would take the Freedom of speaking his Mind the first Opportunity, with that Candour and Caution, as at once bespoke him to be an Overseer indeed, not lording over the greatest or least Offender, but in Meekness and Sincerity, labour'd that Things amiss might be mended.

In his Ministry he was very Exemplary, tenderly regarding the Service of

Strangers that travelled amongst us in that Work, by giving way to them. And in our Meetings for Business, was of good Service, and great Condescension to his Brethren, on the one Hand guarding against an undue Liberty, and on the other, That under a Pretence of Zeal, no private or by-End might be gratify'd, or colour'd, under a false Cover of pretending Care for the Church, and thereby oppress the Innocent. His frequent Advice against Party taking Jealousie, and evil Surmising, was of good Service, and seasonable.

He was Charitable and Open-Hearted to such as were in Want, not saying be warmed, be filled, be cloathed, and give nothing; but his Purse was as open to assist the Poor as his Heart, both publick and private being very Exemplary to others who were more ready to blame the Poor than to feed them; tho' himself was no Encourager of Idleness, but would with a becoming Sweetness, and in a modest Manner, reprove that Temper where he found it in any to appear; being an Example of Diligence, of Plainness, and Temperance in Eating, Drinking, and Apparel;

Apparel; Liberal, but not Extravagant; Frugal, but not Covetous, taking that Care in all his Affairs, which did become him. As also he was ready to entertain Strangers with a chearful Mind, faithful in his Testimony, a good Husband, a tender Father, and a kind Neighbour. His Memory is dear to us, and our Prayers are to the Lord of the Harvest, whose Work it is, that he will be pleased to raise up more such faithful Labourers as this our dear Friend, who, in a Word, was a great and good Man, of whom our Loss is great, but his Gain more.

Sign'd by Order, and on Behalf of
our Quarterly Meeting held at
Glastenbury, this 22d Day of the
first Month, 1721.

*John Hipsley,
Richard Cooper,
Philip Watts,
William Chead,
Richard Marchant,
Samuel Clothier,
William Jenkin's
William Perris,*

*Matthew Stowar,
Matthew Stowar, Jun.
William Hopkins,
Thomas Gingell,
John Jenkins,
John Read,
John Godwine,
James Clothier,*

Thomas

Thomas Holwill,
William Blackmore.

John Blackmore,
Edward Champion,

Arthur Gundry,

John Maddock,

Joseph Pinger,

William Horwood,

Thomas Hurd,

Thomas Metford,

James Govett,

Joseph Bryant,

John Clark,

John Bull, Jun.

Robert Banton,

Thomas Beedall,

Samuel Bowmas,

A T E S.

*A TESTIMONY from the
Monthly Meeting held at Long-
Sutton, the 25th Day of the 2d
Month, 1722, for the South-
Quarter of the County of Somer-
set, concerning Elias Osborn,
deceas'd.*

OUR well-beloved antient Friend and Brother, *Elias Osborn* afore-said, during his Time, having been a Member of this Meeting, in a weighty Concern of Mind on so sedate an Occasion, we premise in Commemoration of his Memory, *viz.* He was a Man well qualify'd by the Power of God to serve Him, His Church and People, which he faithfully perform'd, *being not only a Hearer, but a Doer of the Law,* and therefore consequently was justified.

His

His Removal doth excite us in Humility of Spirit, to implore that Divine Arm, which at first gather'd him with the many Worthies of *Israel*, who are gone to Rest, whose Memorial is precious to the Living in Christ, to extend more and more the same Divine Power, that many others may come up in the *Beauty of Holiness*, to supply their Places in this our Time.

As the parting with such near Friends doth occasion Sorrow and Grief of Heart, yet we regard that in such Exercises, and

all others, *Our Sorrow be such*
Thef. 4. 13. *as those who have Hope, that*
Heb. 6. 19.

Hope which is an Anchor to the Soul; being satisfy'd that this our Friend, is gone to the resting Place prepared for the Righteous, where is the full Fruition of the Blessings in store for

all them, *Who by patient Continuance in Well-doing, seek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality.*
Rom. 2. 7.

As the foregoing Testimony from our Quarterly Meeting, does more particularly set forth the many good Qualities and Acquirements by the Grace of God which he was endow'd withal, we having

ving good Satisfaction therewith, do refer to the same, concluding that he does with the good Prophet, deserve that Noble Epitaph, *So dy'd this our worthy Friend, the Servant of the Lord.*

And as by the following Narrative of his own Penning, wherein he gives Account of his Birth, together with some of the many Experiences and Trials which he was acquainted with, you may find that he was arriv'd to a good Old Age. He departed this Life at his own Habitation in *Old Chard*, the 29th Day of the 4th Month, 1720, in great Unity with his Friends, and we conclude, we may safely say, in Peace with God and Man; and was interr'd in Friends Burial Ground there, the 5th Day of the 5th Month following, being accompany'd with a great Concourse of Friends and others.

The Wise Man recommends the going *to the House of Mourning, much before that of Mirth*, setting forth the Advantage the Wise do procure thereby, as may be seen in *Ecclesiastes 7. 2, 4.* And as the like Inducement to Raise the Mind to Heavenly Cogitations, is set forth by the
Evange-

Evangelical Prophet, *Isaiah* 46, 7, 8. as well as by the good Apostle, *1 Pet.* 1, 24, 25. it may do well for us to take due Notice thereof.

It comes also on our Minds, to remark to the well-inclined Reader, *viz.* The bare reading a Recital of the most approv'd Actions and Admonitions of any Author of the best Esteem, will be of little, or no durable Advantage to them, or any amongst us, unless they, or we, come to so Wise a Consideration whereby we may be edified. In order that it may be so, is the present Concern of our Spirits, therefore we beseech those that may peruse these Memoirs following, to consider what in their own Experience they have *heard*, *1 John* 1. 1, 3. *seen with their Eyes, and looked upon, and their Hands have handled of the Word of Life, and of the Powers of the World to come in like Manner; which may be an Inducement to persevere in Well-doing.*

Such of us as are called to the *Gift of the MINISTRY*, it will add to our Enlargement, and crown our Labours with the best Satisfaction, to take due

due Regard to the Holy Apostle's Example, *by keeping to the Power of the Spirit, and deliver what we understand*; which will dignify our Vocation.

And they, or we, who are Believers in a more private Capacity, it will do well for us all, to regard that our Life in True Religion do not decay, but that we *Wax strong in the Lord*, who will not be wanting to assist us, as we take due Notice to the Dictates of the Manifestation of Grace in our Hearts; for whether we may be Preachers or Hearers, we are *One in Christ*, if we fulfil his Requirings; and as Members of the same Mystical Body, have some Thing (or Office) to do in his Church, as our Conversation is coupled with the Fear of God, that keepeth the Heart clean. We shall know our Duty to him, and one another, and our Edification will answer the End of the Labours bestowed, both in Word and Writing, of our many deceased worthy Friends.

Our fervent Supplication is, that with ~~our record~~ we may thus profit by the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, to be qualified to build up each other in that
most

most Holy Faith, whose Fruits are *Holiness and Godly Living*, so will the Ways of the Lord become *Pleasantness, and his Paths Peace unto us*. And in Admiration of his manifold Blessings, we shall be concerned to say, *Good is the Lord, and worthy, worthy, is He to be waited upon, to whom be all Dominion, Majesty, Praise, and Renown, both now and for evermore. Amen.*

Sign'd by Order, and on Behalf
of our Monthly Meeting a-
foresaid, by

*Philip Hawker,
Thomas Beedal,
James Salter,
William Perris,
Edward Champion,
James Peddle,
Joseph Peddle,
John Willmenson,*

*Francis Wilkins,
Thomas Hurd,
Robert Banton,
John Gillett,
Robert Pierce,
Abraham Huchins,
Thomas Heath.*

A Brief

A Brief
 NARRATIVE
 OF THE
 LIFE of *Elias Osborn, &c.*

IT hath been often upon my Mind, to leave something behind of the Lord's Dealings with me in the Course of my Life, wherein he hath manifested his great Love and Care over me: I have also observed the Manifestations of the Love of God to his People in general, in supporting of them under many Trials and Exercises, and in his own Time sending Deliverances: As also some Observations of manifest Judgements that have fallen upon some Persecutors, and how the Lord hath done for his People, as he did in the Days of old, when *He reprov'd Kings for their Sakes, saying, Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm.*

1 Chron. 16.
 21, 22.

May all who are Partakers of such Mercies, wait upon the Lord to be assisted by him, to walk answerable to the Praise and Honour of his Great Name, who is worthy for evermore.

By the best Account I have, I was sprinkled, or, as they call it baptized (in the common Way then in Use) on the 24th Day of the fourth Month, 1643, in the Parish of *Chelington*, near *Chard*, in the County of *Somerset*: My Father and Mother were Religious People, of those who were then called *Puritans*, and there were some in my Remembrance, (of whom my Father was one) who did desire to answer their Name, according to an Expression then common amongst them, *viz. To keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man*. While they kept here, the Lord was with them, they were then an humble, self-denying, and a suffering People, by the *Ismaelites* of that Day.

As to my Mother, who I have been told, was a very tender, conscientious Woman, she dy'd when I was about Two Years of Age; my Father very carefully kept me at School, and as I grew

grew towards Maturity, he would often have me abroad with him at Lectures, which were much in use in those Days; but the Lord in great Love, was pleased to give me a Sight, that the Life of Religion was greatly wanting amongst them. I well remember my honest Father would, as we were going from a Lecture, make some Repetition of it, and endeavour to inculcate into me what we had heard, and extol the Sermon. I had many good Openings in those Days, and would say to my Father, 'tis true they have good Words, and preach against Pride and Covetousness, but who more in it then they; it seems to me, they are in the Steps of the false Prophets, who teach for Hire, and divine for Money, and seek their Gain from their Quarter, and cry Peace unto the People while they put into their Mouths, otherwise they will prepare War against them: And they seem to be like the Scribes and Pharisees, *Who walk in long Robes, loved the uppermost Rooms at Feasts, the chief Seats in the Synagogues, Greetings in the Market, and to be called of Men Masters;* of whom our Lord Jesus Christ

said, *They shall receive the greater Condemnation.* My Father would seem to be struck with Admiration, and say, *Lord! What will become of this Boy?* I was now near thirteen Years of Age, and had never heard of one called a *Quaker*; — The Lord was pleased to raise Desires in me after that which was Good; I loved to read the Holy Scriptures, with a sincere Desire, that the Lord would give me an Understanding of them. I was inclined to Religion, but the Love of Pleasure and Vanity, hindred my Progress for a considerable Time. About fifteen Years of Age I left my Schooling, and imployed my self in something of the Clothing Trade, and then I met with bad Companions, so that we spent much of our Time in Hunting, and other vain Exercises, in which I exceeded most others; but the Lord was pleased to follow me with his Judgements, and to preserve me from gross Evils, that many others run into, blessed be his Name for the manifold Mercies he hath made me Partaker of.

Much after this Manner I passed away my Time, until King *Charles's* Return,
and

and then there was a strange Alteration as to Religion. I tryed the *Common-Prayer*, but was very soon weary of it, and indeed of all other Religions that I then knew; the Lord satisfied me, that amongst the several Forms, and great Professions, the Life and Power was lost.

I was now about nineteen Years of Age, and grew weary of my Sports and Pastimes, but it was a great Cross to leave them all, until I knew the Day of God's Power. I had now heard of some called *Quakers*, and Providence so ordered it, that I saw a Book or two of their Principles, and was soon convinced of the TRUTH, through the Lord's Goodness to me. But when I came to make Profession of it, great was the Opposition within and without: My Father, who was generally loving until now, I observed of him, and some other of my Relations and Acquaintance of the *Puritan Party*, so called, joyned together to oppose the TRUTH, (tho' I believe it was through Ignorance) but their lowly, humble, and in some Respect, self-denying Zeal, turned to a

harsh persecuting Temper: And so from *Puritans*, many of them came to be narrow and ridged in their Principles, and were some of the first, and worst, that opposed TRUTH, tho' some were more moderate, and disliked the Fierceness of the others.

About this Time, I went to a Widow Woman in our Parish, who kept the Trade of Clothing, and assisted her in her Business; she had two Daughters, the eldest was a *Zealous Baptist*, but grew dissatisfied for want of Life and Peace: She met with some Friends, was convinced, and lived and dyed a *Zealous Honest Friend*. The younger Daughter was convinced soon after, and the Mother likewise, so I was then in an *Honest Religious Family*, which was a great Help to me.

Now the nearer the Lord was pleased to bring us to the Precious TRUTH, the more we were a Wonder to our Neighbours and Acquaintance, and the more Opposition we met with; but as *Our Eye was to the Lord, and trust in him, he was pleased to support us through all.* Some Time after, my self, and the younger Daughter

Daughter, had an Affection for each other in way of Marriage ; her Mother consented, but my Father was averse to it, on the Account of Religion ; but I believed, and so did not make Haste, but would wait Times when he was in a loving Temper, and then speak to him again ; and he said, *He had Hopes to reclaim me from my erroneous Opinion, but now he thought I was so grounded in them, that I would marry no Body but one of my own Judgement, and then he had rather I marry'd her than any other Quaker.* She was of a very loving obliging Temper, and my Father afterwards loved her dearly. If any one should think this a needless Digression, I have a twofold End in it, *viz.* That young People take Care to be subject to Parents as much as in themselves, tho' they are not of our Way ; Truth will lead to it if truly minded ; Besides, I saw the Hand of the Lord in it, by which I had that which I desired, with Reputation to my Profession, in so much that my Father being asked several Things about me, by a near Relation, concerning my Behaviour and Language to him, he said, *Prethy, don't trouble*

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thy self nor me about it, I have done what I can to reclaim him, but I am satisfied 'tis Matter of Conscience to him; he is more Dutiful to me now then before. It had this good Effect, that my Honest, Religious Aunt sent me a long Letter, and desired me to come and see her, for she had heard a good Report of me, and that *Difference in Judgement, should not cause Difference in Affection:* And divers Times when I visited her, she has told of her Love to me, and that she had heard of the great Pains I took to visit my Friends, and pray'd God to bless my Labour, and would say to me, Cousin, *I am too Old to change my Religion, but hope we shall meet in Heaven.* This I write, that the Lord may have the Praise and Honour, who was pleased to help me to bear a Testimony for him, and give me Experience. *That to be faithful in small Things, meet with great Reward.*

And now to return to the Twenty Third Year of my Age: I took the aforementioned young Woman to be my Wife (amongst Friends) and the Lord was pleased to make her a Help meet for me, so we lived and kept Trade together,

gether, but my Mother-in-Law was House-keeper, and a Noble, Generous Spirited Woman she was. By this Time we had got some Acquaintance with Friends, our Hearts and House were open to receive travelling Friends, and the Blessing of the Lord attended us every way. So we continued together in much Love and Unity, as a People of *one Heart, to serve the Lord with one Consent*, and he was with us to our great Comfort and Satisfaction; and we had not much Disturbance on the Account of Religion, until the *Conventicle-Act* came forth, and then the Nation seem'd all of a Flame; the worst of Men were let loose to ruin their honest Neighbours by a Law, and many who had made a great Flourish about Religion, were almost at their Wits-end; *Fear surpris'd the Hypocrite, and Sinners in Sion were afraid, but many of the Upright rejoiced, and suffered chearfully the spoiling of their Goods, for the Sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they had believed.* It was my Lot to be at the first Friends Meeting in our County, that was broke up on that Act, which was a large Monthly Meeting
at

at Gregory-Stoak, thither came Captain Lacy, with most of a Troop of Horse, in Fury, with drawn Swords in one Hand, and Pistols in the other ; but the Captain was civil, reproved the rude Soldiers, and said, *We should have no Hurt, only they must prosecute the King's Laws*: There were seventeen sent to Prison for not telling their Names ; I got off several, but it was a new Thing, and poor Friends, for want of Knowledge in that Point, were afraid it would be some Snare to them. I think they came there but once more, and took no Goods ; but there were some poor, mercenary, wicked Creatures, that undertook that ignominious Employ of Informers, and met with some Justices bad enough to encourage them, and take a Share of the Spoil. Divers of them were so greedy of their Prey, that they overshot themselves, and got a Prison for their Labour, and others ran away.

And I cannot well omit to mention Part of what I knew, hoping it may be entertaining to some of the younger Generation : There was one *Henry Waldron*, Justice of Peace, (so called) and Captain
of

of a Militia Troop of Horse, who lived about Eight Miles off, did the most Mischief on that Account, and held it the longest of any Man I knew: He would come to Meetings with his Troopers, and take Names, and make *Conventiclers* of those he thought he could get something of, and make Rioters of the others, and send them to Prison. We tryed that Point with him at a Quarter-Session, and had a Counsellor that pleaded our Case nobly, by which the Captain was foiled; and I being present, did believe most of the Justices on the Bench were ashamed of him.

Now, as it pleased the Lord to order it, that we were preserved from Suffering beyond many others, we thought He expected the more from us; there was a Meeting-House much wanted at *Ilminster*, a few Miles from us, it being a Meeting to which we belonged, so we bought a Platt of Ground, and raised a good large House, about Forty Years since; it hath been of good Service, and there are yet large Meetings at Times, many sober People will come and hear: when the Lord is pleased to give an Opportunity,

portunity: Our Family was chiefly concerned in it, which was a large Expence; I do not mention it to complain, or boast, desiring to avoid that, but to encourage others in Acts of this Nature, or any other, wherein they may be serviceable to do Good. I have this to say, *I believe I have never the less Substance for any Thing I have spent in TRUTH'S Service.*

In the Year 1673, we removed to *Chard* to dwell; here was but one of our Profession in the Town, but we found some very loving, honest Neighbours, who, in the hottest Times of taking Goods for being at Meetings, used great Endeavours to favour us, so that we suffered but little on that Account; tho' after this, divers Warrants for Distress came out against me, all this Time the Lord was pleased to preserve us in Love and Unity, to our great Comfort, which was of good Report, and a good Pattern to our new Neighbours: But as all outward Enjoyments are uncertain, so the Lord was pleased to give me a deep Exercise not long after (in the 5th Month, 1675,) in taking away my dear Wife, (which
was

was a very near Tryal;) but he supported me under it, in a full Belief, *That our Loss was her great Gain*, she being a Woman that in Sincerity loved the Lord, his Truth, and People: She left me four Children, to whom, as also to me, my Mother and Sister were extraordinary kind and helpful, which was a great Mercy.

And now to return to my own Family; whereas I said we had not much Disturbance on the Account of Religion, (until the *Conventicle-Act* came forth) yet one Thing comes to my Remembrance, that some Time before my Mother-in-Law and self were put into Prison, for not paying Tythe, at the Suit of the then Lord *Paulett* in his Name, by the Contrivance of his Steward, and a Tythe-Farmer, upon which I sent his Lord a Letter; he called the Farmer *Lyar*, and said, *He did not know we were in Prison*: He was desired to admit me to speak with him; he answered, *He knew what I would say, so did not care to speak with me*; adding, *He knew me to be an Honest Man*, (for so he accounted me when I was a great Hunter with him) but

but since I had got this Faction's Opinion, he knew not what to say to it. By the Advice of Friends, I gave Appearance, came Home, set my House in Order, expecting to go to Prison again, but all was quiet: My Mother remain'd there some Time, but not long, for the Keeper had Orders to send her Home, and we heard no more of it. This I mention, to the Honour of the Memory of the Lord PAULETT, who I never heard was guilty of Persecution.

This Imprisonment was a very great Disturbance to my poor Father, who also fearing further Suffering would attend us, by the Act, thought we should be ruined: He used all Endeavours he could, to perswade me to save my self, as the Practice of his Friends (the Presbyterians) then was. He would say, He had bestowed some Learning upon me, and I was turn'd Fool; he had taken Care to save some Thing for me, and I was in a Way to lose it all.

In this Time, while they were hot in prosecuting that unreasonable Law, it pleased God to increase our Zeal, to bear a Testimony to the True Worship, and
we

we were frequent at Meetings, not daring to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the Manner of some was; and the Lord was pleased to give us Peace and Satisfaction therein, blessed be his Name for ever. So the Lord gave us Increase both inward and outward, and we suffer'd but little Spoil of Goods, to what some honest Friends did; and many were turned to be our Friends, who at first were Enemies to us, which made my Father say, he observed the good Man's Words verified of me, and my honest Friends, *That when a Man's Ways please the Lord,*

Prov. 16. 17.

he maketh his Enemies to be at Peace with him. From this Time forward, my Father was very loving, and I observed nothing troubled him so much as his Harshness towards me, in the Time of my first Convincement: He would divers Times say, *He had been an unnatural Father to me, and I had been a dutiful Son to him;* so he came to have a Love for Friends, and would sometimes go to Meetings, which was a great Comfort to me; and when he was near his End, desired to be buried by my dear Wife, which was accordingly done.

Hitherto

Hitherto I had been a constant Frequenter of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, from the Time of my Marriage, which was about Ten Years, in which I was more and more confirm'd in the *Way of Truth and Holiness*: The Lord was pleased to own and honour us with his Presence; and those who in a Sense of the want of it, desired Wisdom of him to know, and Power to perform that which he required of them, to such he was pleased to give it, blessed be his Name.

And now came on another Exercise upon me: I had some Openings upon my Mind, and Impulse upon my Spirit, to speak a few Words in Meetings, for Worship, but let in so much Reasoning with Flesh and Blood, as to my Unfitness and Unworthiness, having formerly been a wild, wanton Lad, that I could not appear for a considerable Time, which became my great Exercise, and a Charge of Unfaithfulness lay upon me from the Lord, and I had not Confidence to discover it to any one, until the Lord in great Mercy was pleased to make way for me: There was a worthy sensible Friend,
(who

(who was long a Prisoner at *Tewkesbury* for Conscience Sake) with whom I was often at Meetings, he having a Sense of my Exercise, would say to me after a Meeting, *Elias, How is it with thee: Shouldst thou not have spoken some Words in Meeting to Day?* So when he had made Way for it, I could unbosom myself to him, and tell him the Concern I was under; the Reasoning I had in my self concerning my Inability and Unworthiness, as before expressed, and with the great and eminent Apostle, saying, *Who is sufficient for these Things;* to which my dear Friend replied, *Remember what our Lord Jesus Christ said, Every Branch in me that beareth Fruit, our Heavenly Father purgeth it that it may bring forth more Fruit. Put to the Work,* said he, *and thou wilt do valiantly, or to that Effect:* This was our dear Friend *John Anderton*, with whom I had long and intimate Acquaintance. I received so much Benefit and Comfort, that now it comes in my Way, I cannot well omit to revive his Memory: He was a Man of great Understanding, both in Temporal and Spiritual Things, very solid and weighty:

When he gave his Judgement, he seldom fail'd of being in the right, and was certainly endued with the *Spirit of Prophecy*, of which I can give some Instances: There was a Time remember'd by some, wherein King *Charles* suspended the Prosecution of the Penal Law, supposed to be intended in Favour of the *Papist*, which was soon taken off when the Parliament sate, however we had Benefit by it. This our Friend had (in that little Time of Liberty) two Meetings, at a Town called *Wellington*, near *Taunton*, supposed to be a Place of a loose wild People, as most in our County, nor was there another Meeting of Friends in Twelve Years after, and no Appearance of any one convinced then that ever I heard of. My dear Friend, *John Anderson*, told me with Confidence, *There was Bread cast upon the Waters, which would be found after many Days*; the Truth whereof has been eminently fulfilled since that Time, and when speaking of the Duke of York, he would say, *What if he come to the Crown, and give us Liberty beyond all that have gone before him.*

After I was something concern'd in publick,

lick, he greatly desir'd my Company to travel a little with him, and was a tender, Nursing Father to me ; it was my Lot to see him a few Days before his Decease, and he said, *He was to be gather'd to his Fathers,* and was in a very sweet resigned Frame of Mind : He took me by the Hand very tenderly, and said, *We have done valiantly together in the Name of the Lord ; and you that are to succeed, will do valiantly as you keep near the Lord, and see mighty Things brought to pass.* Adding, *Tho' Things look dark at present, and People are at their Wits-end for fear of Popery and Slavery, yet it will be far otherwise then they expect ; for there is a great Gathering Day nigh at Hand, and the Lord will gather many Thousands to the Brightness of his arising.* Thus this great and good Man, had an immediate Sight and Sense of what we have seen in Measure fulfilled : He departed this Life a few Days after, in Faith and Assurance of an everlasting Inheritance, as a Reward of all his Labours, Exercises and Afflictions, while he was in this Vale of Tears.

I continued a Widower about three Years, and now the Lord was pleased to

give me another Wife, who has also been a Help-meet to me, blessed be God who has made her so: She is one who loves the Lord, his Truth, and People, in Sincerity; and in many Afflictions that he has seen meet to try me withal, she hath been ready to bare a Share with me, and yet is, we have lived together Thirty Three Years. In the Time I had no Wife, I made not much Progress in a *Publick Testimony*, tho' I bore the Weight of it; 'twas still hard to appear, and then I was censured by some, that now I would keep at Home, and loose my *Testimony*; but they were mistaken, the Lord in Love, was pleased to make me *forsake all to obey and follow him*; and my Wife was made willing freely to give me up to that Work and Service the Lord required of me; and in the worst Time of the **Informers**, when we expected to go from Meeting to Prison, I took many a hard Journey to serve TRUTH. I cannot say that ever my dear Wife endeavour'd to hinder me from a Meeting, if she thought I was well.

One Thing I must observe with Thankful Acknowledgement to the Lord for

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his Goodness to me ; while I was a Widower, my old Mother-in-Law desired me, that if I marry'd again, that we might live together, which we did, in great Love and Unity, until my now Wife had Three Children, and I had Four before, so there was my Mother, my Sister, my Self and Wife, and Seven Children. The Lord being pleased to preserve us so in Love and Unity, I saw a good Service in it, it was a Credit to our Profession ; those that were not Friends, would say, *See what the Fear of the Lord will do when 'tis lived in.* Here was a great Family and a great Trade, and often was I constrained in the Love of God to leave it all, *To serve the Lord, his Truth and People,* and he was with me to support and strengthen me ; and being enabled by him, *To be faithful in a little, he made me Ruler over more,* blessed be his worthy Name ; and when my Service was over abroad, I came Home with Comfort, and finding Things well there, it was a great Encouragement to leave it again, when the Lord required it of me, which I found he often did.

But now to return again to the *Informers*: On the 23^d Day of the 7th Month, 1680, was the Time for our Quarterly-Meeting at *Ipswich*; at the same Time came Captain *Waldron*, with his Troop to Muster, (supposed) on Purpose to do Mischief: We used to have our Meeting at a large House that the Goal-Keeper rented, to accommodate Prisoners, there being many in those Days: Now he would not spare the House for this Service, but an Inn-keeper very lovingly offered his House, which we accepted. After Friends had sate together a While, to wait upon the Lord, the Women went up into the Chamber, and the Men continued in the lower Room, then comes the Captain with some of his Troopers, and took the Names of Men and Women, (and as we thought) made five of his Men swear, for they were Tools fit for his Purpose, as will farther appear: So he made *Two Conventicles* of it, for which, in short, the Inn-keeper, whose Name was *Robert Abbot*, paid Forty Pounds. This was such a notorious, unprecedented Thing, that *Abbot* took Counsel upon it, and was

was advised to try it at Common Law, which was accordingly done at the Assizes at *Wells*, (I think the third Assizes after the Conviction.) There were several Friends to shew their Kindness to *Abbott*, who had suffer'd so much on our Account, amongst whom I was one, who had more Opportunity to make Observations than many other Friends: I was close by the **Informers** when they swore, four of them to one Effect, *viz.* to *Two Conventicles*, one of Men in a lower Room, and another of Women in a Chamber; but *John Broom*, a brisk young Fellow, swore most to their Purpose, the Judge asking him, *Whether he heard the Women preach?* He said, *Yes, my Lord; and when we came into the Chamber, there was Money on the Table, I suppose gather'd for the Preacher.* The Judge, who before this Trial came on, seem'd moderate, was now in a great Rage, call'd the Inn-keeper hard Names, and threatn'd what he would do to him. At last *Abbott's* Council got some Time to plead, and said, *My Lord, these People were quiet at Abbott's House, they lodged, eat, and drank there, and paid for what they had, and the*

Women had Meat in their Chamber ; and we conceive the Money the Evidence mentions, was to pay the Reckoning ; and if either of these Women should say a long Grace, (which is not usual) what should the Inn-keeper do to it my Lord. To which the Judge sharply replied, Will you plead against the Government, Brother I am ashamed of it. The Counsellor answered, I would have you to know my Lord, I am as much for the Government as your self ; but this is my Client, and we must not pay Forty Pounds and not speak for it : So poor Abbott was found guilty, and order'd to pay treble Cost, which with his own Charges came to twenty Pounds more. This was the Time when those that wrought Wickedness were set up, and those who by their Oppression and Perjury tempted God, were delivered ; but the Lord met with them, as will appear in what I have further to say : Captain Waldron seeing me at the Assizes, resolved Revenge, as his Actions soon after declared, for the last first Day of the next Month, he, with his Troopers, came to our Monthly Meeting at Ilmister, and I being then declaring TRUTH to the People,

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two of the Troopers, whereof the afore-named *John Broom* was one, came in a violent Manner and plucked me down, as if they were pulling me out, then came the Captain and gave me several hard Blows on my Head behind, with his Cane, but I having put on my Hat, had but little Harm; my dear Wife being then big with Child, went Home and miscarry'd upon it: When I was out of the House, I said pleasantly to the Captain, *What dost intend now, this is Club-Law?* He answered me with a Curse, and said, *You will not fight, but you will lay your Heads together to do Mischief:* So he sent for the Constables, and committed Sixty Nine of us to them, for them to have us before Sir *Edward Phillips* next Day, where Captain *Waldron* thought to be honour'd with Sir *Edward's* joining with him to send us all to Prison, but was much disappointed: Great was the Love and Power of God manifested unto his poor People, who truly trust in him, tho' we had some perverse, wicked Enemies; the Hearts of many were tender'd, and a great Love raised towards us, and glad they were to shew us any Kindness.

Kindness. The next Day Sixty Six of us appeared, and I told Sir *Edward*, who was Judge of the Sessions, why the other three were not there; and tho' he was no Friend to *Dissenters*, he did then allow me Time to lay the Wickedness of Captain *Waldron* upon him: I then cleared my self to my great Satisfaction, and I confess I loved him the better all his Life after; and of Sixty Six, there were but Four or Six committed to Prison, whereof I was one. When we came to Prison, we found very good Company, it being a Time of great Imprisonment of FRIENDS; we were to appear at the next Quarter-Sessions, which was at *Bath*, from thence we were to return to Prison, and appear the next Sessions, which was at *Bruton*, and a very remarkable one it was; there was then a very violent **Spirit of Persecution** in some, and particularly in Bishop *Mew*, of *Bath and Wells*; but the Lord was pleased to appear for the Deliverance of his poor, oppressed People, according to the Faith of some, and contrary to the Expectation of others. There lived one Lord *Fitzharding*, who had a great Kindness for

for our honest Friend *Thomas Whitehead*, he appeared nobly for Friends, and, as we heard, the Bishop, and Judge of the Sessions dined at this Lord's House : He asked them, *What they intended to do with the Quakers?* And said, *There were many poor Men amongst them, that were wanted in their Families; and some Clothiers that kept many poor People at work : And, said he, if we take this Course, the Poor will rise upon us, and knock us on the Head.* So the next Day the Bishop came not to the Bench, and this Lord afore-mention'd, sent his Gentleman (as they called him) whom I saw sate by the Judge of the Sessions, while our Friends were discharged; at which the Chief, or Head-Clerk, who had got abundance by other Dissenters, said, *What all discharged?* Yes, Mr. Bennett, a General Goal-Delivery. So there were about Fourscore Friends set at Liberty that Day, some of whom had suffered very hard Imprisonment, tho' the Keeper and his Wife would be sometimes kind to some Friends, yet very cross and ill-natured to others. My Fellow-Prisoners were then released, but as to me, they talked of tendering
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me the Oath, yet they moderately suffered me to speak pretty freely in open Court, but I returned to Prison again. With some other Friends, I wrote several Letters to Sir *Edward Phillips*, and the Keeper, *Giles Bale*, told me, *He took them very kindly, and shew'd one of them to him, saying, 'Twas great Pity I should be a Quaker: And he being Friendly, made the Keeper so likewise, that I had pretty much Liberty till the next Sessions, where the Judge discharged me Friendly. And thus was the great Blast blown over for that Time, blessed be God, Who suffered the Wrath of Man to go no further against his People, then he enabled them to bear; and restrain'd the Remainder.*

And now to relate some Thing of what happen'd to the **Informers**, for their Wickedness, and false Swearing, against an *Innocent People*: I shall first begin with **John Broom**, one of the Evidences against the *Inn-Keeper*, and he who pulled me down so violently as I was speaking and exhorting the People in the Fear of God at *Ilmister* aforesaid. Soon after this, the afore-mention'd Troop mustered near that Place, and one of the Compa-
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ny discharged his Pistol at the said **John Broom**; the Paper which stopt in the Powder, hurt him on the Thigh, and tho' it seem'd to be but a small Matter, it ganger'd, and kill'd him, (as an Honest Chirurgeon told me.) This was a very publick Thing, and there was great Notice taken of it by many *Sober People*.

The next in my Way is **Francis**, the Brother of the said **John**, who was riding with more of the Gang about this Time, to disturb a *Presbyterian Meeting*, (in a Frolick) shot through a Hedge, and kill'd one of their own Company, suppos'd to be accidental, and not willingly; however 'twas taken Notice of as a Judgment of God upon him, and about the same Time he had a Child killed by a Horse.

The third of these **Informers** against the Inn-keeper *Abbott*, was **James Genge** of this Town, who may be said to out-do the Deeds of the Wicked; I think very few then, or now living, that could equal him for so many Sorts of Wickedness: When the Duke of *Monmouth* was here with his Army, as **Genge** was generally

nerally hated for his Badness, *Monmouth's* Men took him up, and tyed him to a Cart in Triumph, by which he had Opportunity to see many which were in the Army, and when the Duke was routed, he would send to those which he saw there, and threaten to convict them; so divers to save their Lives, gave him Money, insomuch that he said, *He had Guineas enough to cover a large Room where he lived*; from which I must degress a little, to mention a great Providence as to my self when the Rout was over: Captain *Waldron* and his Troopers came divers Times hither to seek to get some Prey, and to find where had been Horses out in *Monmouth's* Army, tho' rid away without the Owner's Knowledge or Consent, and where they found any would take them away, which was my Case; for two bad Fellows rid away two of my Mares into his Army, one of them was a fine high priz'd one of my own breeding, judg'd to be worth Twenty Guineas; so when the Duke came hither, I went to him to desire my Mares, he ordered me the least, but said, *He could not spare the other*: This was in the lower Side
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of the Field, and **Genge** at the same Time was ty'd to the Cart in the upper-Side, so there was the Army betwixt us; however Captain *Waldron*, (to give him his due) coming to Town a While after, **Genge** offered to swear that I gave my fine Mare to the Duke: He, (who had been so much my Enemy before) honestly refused his Oath, and reproved him, saying, He was a **Rogue**, and that if the Thing were true, yet it would be a false Oath in him, because when I spake with the Duke, there was the Army betwixt us. And farther added, That he believed I loved King James too well, to give Monmouth my Mare: And the Inn-keeper (as I was told) threatned to kick him out of Door, for abusing so Honest a Man: So that amongst the Preservations and Deliverances that the L O R D hath given us to see, this hath been one: He hath sometimes caused the Earth to help the Woman. And now to go through with **Genge**, not long after this, a Lawyer put him in Prison for about Nine Pounds he owed for Law; he lay there some Time, and died miserable: The Head-Keeper, *Giles Bale*, told me, That he rotted alive from Head to Foot.

The Fourth of these Brethren in Iniquity, was **Thomas Mills** of Ilmister, another of his Troop, and a Bailiff. He was very officious to assist the Captain in taking People's Goods, &c. He lived some Years after, and then was to have a Sum of Money to arrest a Debtor, who having a Pistol, told **mills**, 'Twas Death for him to come near; but however he pressed towards him, and the other shot him dead on the Place. We have several Instances in Scripture, That the Lord recompensed the Wicked sometimes in their own Persons, and sometimes in their Posterity, many Years after the Fact committed. *Amaleck* is a remarkable One, of which an ingenious Annotator says, *It was Four Hundred Years betwixt the Lord's threatening to have War with them, and the Time Saul was sent to destroy them.*

The Fifth, and last of this Crew, concerned against *Abbott* the Inn-keeper, was **Bartholomew Parker**, a Bailiff of *Crookhorn*: He was an Evidence to make the *Two Conventicles*, (so called,) but when he came to swear at the Assizes, he looked about, and saw me close behind him, and did say very little by Way

of Evidence; the Reason was this: *In the Time betwixt the Conviction of the said Meeting at Abbott's House, and the Trial about it, this Parker in a Quarrel, abused a Man of our Town that he dyed, and when near his End; he said, That Parker had kill'd him; for which he was bound over to the Assize, and then he applyed himself to me, and said, That I saw he did us no Injury, nor would not for many Worlds: And withal told me, Some of my Neighbours had a Mind to take away his Life, therefore desir'd me to use my Interest to do him a Kindness: So he escaped the Stroke which by Law was due to him, and lives to this Day, A great Sufferer by Poverty.*

However, Captain Waldron went on to do what Mischief he could; we had an Account of near One Thousand Pounds he got from the *Dissenters*, but it fared with him accordingly: He had a Family about him, the *Brooms* aforesaid, who were very assistant to him in this wicked Work of *Informing*: They lived a very vitious, scandalous, extravagant Life together, so that these *Brooms*, with his own Help, swept him almost clean of all he had. He sold a brave Estate, for

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which

which he had about Seven Thousand Pounds, and when this was gone, he divers Times would say, (as I have been credibly told) *That it was the Dissenters Money had undone him.* He mortgaged another Estate, and run it out to that Length, that his near Neighbour affirmed, *That a Baker in his own Parish would not trust him for a Six-penny Loaf;* and so he dyed in great Poverty. I think he lived some Time after King WILLIAM was on the Throne, which must be to his great Mortification.

And now I am come to the Time of King JAMES's giving Liberty, in which I am comforted in the Thoughts of the Observations which I have to make thereupon: Then I remembered what my dear Friend John Anderson told me as a Prediction, concerning Wellington's fate: *It is remembered by many, what a great Opacity there was amongst People at that Time, with respect to hear FATHUR restored:* I got the Market House there for a Meeting, and being not willing to engage alone in such a great Concern, waited a while, until our honest, ancient Friend, John Dando, came hither, who was very free to go with me; *it was sup-*
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posed there was not less then Five Hundred People very quiet and attentive; the Power of the Lord was over all; He was pleased to give Ability according to the Occasion, which was a great Encouragement for some to trust in him. There was another large Meeting in a little Time after, to great Satisfaction: Now was the Time, that the Bread cast upon the Waters there, about Twelve Years before, came to be feand again: There were many convinced at these Two Meetings, but especially at the first. Some Time after I was saying to an ingenious young Man, who was convinced at the first Meeting, That I thought there were Twenty convinced that Day, who made some Profession of TRUTH. He said, He believed he could name at least Thirty: Many of those received TRUTH in the Love of it; divers of them who lived in the Fear of GOD, are gone to their Long Home, and doubtless are entred into that Rest that GOD hath prepared for those that love him: And a Remnant remains, with whom I have often been comforted in the Enjoyment of the LORD'S Presence with us. There is now a very good Meeting-House, and large Monthly

Meetings; Many People love to hear, but to do, is always hard to Flesh and Blood.

As there was in this Time a great Openness in many Places, I may mention two, (*viz.*) Spiceland and Cullumpton, the first Five Miles West from Wellington, and the other Five Miles West from Spiceland: There was a good Meeting-House in each Place, where Monthly Meetings were kept in Troublesome Times; But when this Day of Liberty came, there was such flocking of the People, and TRUTH had such an Entrance amongst them, that one would have thought the Generality of them, in some Miles round in that Country, would have been convinced, and I believe Hundreds were, who did not know Conversion for want of coming to that Power which would have done the Work for them. There remains great Monthly Meetings at the Places aforenamed, and many Honest Friends belong to them: Now the Harvest was great, but the Labourers in those Parts (I mean amongst our selves) were but few; but as we had a full Dependance upon the LORD, and a Trust and Confidence in Him, we found Him to be a present Help in the most needful Time. It was now that the Love of
God

God constrained some to run to and fro, that Knowledge might increase : It was now that some saw the Desire of their Souls, and were greatly satisfied therein, (viz.) Many turned from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan, to receive Remission of Sins, and an Inheritance amongst them that are sanctified by Faith in the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

And now, tho' the Testimony of TRUTH, and the Bearers thereof, met with Friendly Reception in most Places, yet there were some wicked Instruments would shew their Envy, tho' they had not Power to do much ; Two Instances whereof I may mention : Having been in the West to visit Friends, there was a Meeting appointed at Okehampton, about Twenty Miles beyond Exeter ; the Company was so great that we went to the Cross, an Honest Friend, (*Robert Ford*) spake first, and there was a wicked Fellow went up the Steps, intending, as it was said, To throw him down, but was prevented. Afterwards I had a pretty good Time amongst the People, but many were wild and rude, which did some Hurt ; so we went from thence to a Widow Woman's House of the Town, who

who was a Friend, and had a Meeting there : The afore-mention'd bad Fellow, came behind *Robert* as he was speaking, and put his Hand through the Window, and pluckt off a Lock of his Hair : He was soon after taken so bad in both Hands, that he could not feed himself ; of which there was great Notice taken, and the People said, *It was a just Judgement upon him, for plucking off the Quaker's Hair.*

The next, and for ought I know the last Instance of this Kind followeth. We had a Meeting at *Crediton*, about Ten Miles from *Exeter*, where were many sober People, who would have been glad with a quiet Meeting, to have heard what we had to say for our Religion : Here our dear Friend, *John Peters*, was with me, and spoke first, but there was a very wicked Fellow, who in a wanton, airy Way, gave much Trouble, by stirring up the wild People to sporting themselves in Folly and Madness, to the Grief of the sober People, who at last thrust him out of the House. Then I got a little Time to speak, and he came to the Window and said, *He would sing us one merry Song before he left us.* I bid the People take Notice, whether some Thing
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more than common, did not befall him who made such a Disturbance that Day, but the People afterwards reported that I said, *If he dyed the common Death of all Men, the Lord had not spoken by me*; altho of this I am not certain, and therefore shall leave it. Now this being but a little before the Prince of O K A N G E came in, at his coming to Exeter, this poor, vile Fellow, goes and lifts for a Soldier under him, and soon after deserted, and when caught, was shot to Death at Exeter.

Thus we have seen the Love of God to his People, in supporting, preserving, and in his own Time delivering of them, and also the clear Manifestation of his Displeasure, by his Judgements, upon his and their Enemies. Now was the Day of Deliverance come, which had been prophesied of, and many in the Faith had waited for, even a Deliverance *Judg. 5. from the Nose of Archers in the Place* it. of drawing Waters; and many in great Humility and Thankfulness, have rehearsed the Righteous Acts of the Lord, even the Righteous Acts towards the Villages, or the Inhabitants of the Villages in Israel. Oh, that all the Inhabitants of Israel may, in the Remembrance of the manifold Favours of the LORD, towards

...poor distressed People, may appe-
...be assisted by Him, to walk worthy
thereof; that so He, who is the Fountain of
all our Mercies, and G O D in whom all our
fresh Springs are, may continue them to us;
and that we in the Enjoyment thereof, may
return unto Him, in and through the dear Son
of his Love, our Lord JESUS CHRIST,
all Honour and Praise, Renown and Thank-
giving, for he is worthy for evermore.

Having kept no regular Journal of my
Life, with respect to Order of Time, and
when I began this *Narrative*, it was in
some Weakness of Body, but the Lord hath
been pleased to renew my Strength both
inward and outward, and also to revive
my Memory beyond Expectation, I de-
sire Him to preserve me in Remembrance
of His manifold Mercies, and enable me
to walk worthy thereof all the Days of
my appointed Time that I may yet have
in this low World. ? AP 59

This was finish'd the 26th
Day of the 8th Month,
1711, in the 69th Year
of my Age, at Chard, in
the County of Somerset.

Elias Osborn.

T H E E N D.

